

Message Text

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11

ACTION ARA-10

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FM AMEMBASSY BUENOS AIRES

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 6926

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E.O. 11652: N/A

TAGS: PINS, ASEC, AR

SUBJECT: RASH OF BOMBINGS CONTINUES

REF: BUENOS AIRES 5673

1. IN A POST-TRELEW WAVE OF BOMBINGS TWO SYNAGOGUES, A SHOPPING ARCADE AND A NAVY RECRUITING OFFICE WERE HIT ON AUGUST 27. DAMAGE WAS SLIGHT AND NO ONE WAS KILLED, ALTHOUGH TWO WOMEN SUFFERED SEVERE BURNS IN THE NAVY OFFICE EXPLOSION. A POWERFUL EXPLOSIVE WAS ALSO FOUND NEAR LA OPINION EDITORIAL OFFICES FRIDAY BUT WAS DEACTIVATED BY POLICE.

2. ELSEWHERE THE SAME DAY A CAPSULE EXPLODED ON FLORIDA, A CROWDED SHOPPING STREET, RELEASING PAMPHLETS. SIMILAR BOMBS WERE PLACED IN UNDERGROUND SUBWAY STATIONS. ONE WAS DISMANTLED BY POLICE BUT OTHERS WENT OFF. ONE PERSON WAS SLIGHTLY BURNED. TWO BOMBS WERE DISCOVERED AND DETONATED BY POLICE AT THE SCHOOL OF ARCHITECTURE CAMPUS IN NUNEZ AND ANOTHER BOMB BLEW APART AN EMPTY CAR IN LA PLATA. POLICE ALSO REPORTED AUGUST 26 TWO MORE PERSONS--RENAULT OFFICIAL AND AN IBM EMPLOYEE--WERE SERIOUSLY INJURED HANDLING FLOWER BOMBS. THERE WERE, IN ADDITION, THREE OTHER CASES OF FLOWER BOMBS (SEE REFTEL). POLICE ISSUED A SECOND WARNING AGAINST BOMB PACKAGES DISGUISED AS FLOWERS AND PEN SETS.

3. A TRUCK PARKED IN FRONT OF THE EMBASSY THE EVENING OF AUGUST

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27 WAS SUSPECTED TO CONTAIN A BOMB. AFTER THE BOMB SQUAD

HAD DONE SOME DAMAGE TO THE TRUCK ITSELF, THIS TURNED OUT TO BE A FALSE ALARM. THE UNHAPPY OWNERS THEN DROVE THE TRUCK AWAY.

4. ON SATURDAY (AUGUST 28) A POWERFUL EXPLOSIVE DESTROYED A PHARMACY. ANOTHER BOMB EXPLODED IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE OF FORMER FEDERAL POLICE CHIEF LUIS MARGARIDE.

5. COMMENT. WITH THE EXCEPTION OF THE BOMBS PLACED IN FRONT OF THE TWO JEWISH SYNAGOGUES, THE BOMBINGS SEEM TO HAVE BEEN AUTHORED BY THE LEFT. THE SYNAGOGUE BOMBINGS WERE THE LATEST OF SPORADIC ATTACKS UPON JEWISH ESTABLISHMENTS. EARLIER THIS MONTH, SHOPS IN A JEWISH COMMERCIAL DISTRICT WERE SPRAYED WITH GUNFIRE. A SCHOOL AND JEWISH CULTURAL INSTITUTE WERE ALSO ATTACKED. LA OPINION SATURDAY (AUGUST 28) CRITICIZED THE ATTACKS ON THE TWO SYNAGOGUES, ASKING WHY, IN A COUNTRY THAT NEVER BEFORE SUFFERED RELIGIOUS CONFLICT, RELIGION WAS BEING DRAWN INTO ARGENTINA'S PRESENT DIFFICULTIES.

6. THERE WAS NOTHING PARTICULARLY NEW IN THE WAVE OF BOMBINGS. FOR SOME TIME BOMBINGS HAVE BEEN COMMONPLACE IN BUENOS AIRES. THE LATEST ONES DID NOT SUGGEST ANY INCREASED CAPABILITY ON THE PART OF THE TERRORIST GROUPS. THE FLOWERE BOMBS ARE, TO BE SURE, A NEW INNOVATION BUT THEY DO NOT REPRESENT A MORE INDISCRIMINATE FORM OF VIOLENCE THAN BLOWING UP THE LUNCHROOM OF A POLICE STATION.
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